

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)



Ranchers Larry and Jeff Trehern with Joel Moffett, NRCS soil conservationist.

The Treherns implemented prescribed grazing in 1999, about a year and a half before the drought hit the Trehern Ranch south of Pritchett, Colorado. They credit NRCS field office staff with helping them understand their pasture's potential. The Treherns have installed an underground pipeline and a watering tank with cost-share funds from the NRCS Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). Because of their prescribed grazing system, they also qualified for EQIP drought assistance funding last year.

The Program

The **Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)** is a voluntary conservation program that provides technical, financial, and educational assistance to farmers and ranchers. It's a tool that addresses significant natural resource concerns while implementing conservation practices such as:

- Stockwater development
- Irrigation delivery and system improvements
- Tree and shrub plantings
- Grass seeding
- Related management practices such as prescribed grazing, irrigation water management, and wildlife habitat management

The Assistance

EQIP activities are carried out according to an EQIP plan of operation developed in conjunction with the producer. Contracts for confined livestock feeding operations require the development and implementation of a comprehensive nutrient management plan.

EQIP offers contracts with a minimum term of one year after implementation of the last scheduled practice and maximum term of ten years. NRCS pays up to 75 percent of the cost of certain conservation practices important to improving and maintaining the health of natural resources in the area.

Total cost-share and incentive payments are limited to **\$450,000 per individual** over the period of the 2002 Farm Bill.

EQIP Funding Allocations

EQIP funds are distributed within Colorado's 10 watershed areas. These watershed areas are identified at

the local level and are reviewed and supported by the State Technical Committee, made up of conservation partners from various Federal, state, and local agencies, several agricultural organizations, plus others.

The allocation of funds to each watershed was determined by NRCS based on the percentage of the identified five major resource concerns that were in each watershed.

In addition to the general EQIP process, Colorado also receives funds in three watersheds earmarked for **salinity control work**.

Colorado also receives funds through the Ground and Surface Water Conservation (GSWC) component of EQIP. These funds are available for water-conserving practices in the High Plains Aquifer, or that area generally known as the Ogallala Aquifer in Colorado.

2003 Natural Resource Areas of Emphasis

Water Quantity and Quality-accounted for over 40% of the total activity with the most common practices being re-nozzling sprinklers to more efficient packages, converting flood systems to sprinklers or subsurface drip systems.

Grazing Land Health-the second largest issue, saw practices including cross fencing and water development to facilitate better grazing systems.

Soil Erosion on Cropland-focused on terraces, permanent vegetative cover establishment and residue management.

Animal Waste Management and Wildlife-Primary practices were fencing to protect wetlands and riparian areas, tree and shrub plantings and stream stabilization practices.

FISCAL YEAR 2003 EQIP CONTRACT FUNDING

1/28/04

Totals by Watersheds

	# Applications Received	\$ Applications Received	# Applications Approved	\$ Applications Approved	# Acres Treated
Colorado River	196	\$ 7,595,543	25	\$ 1,544,032	7,997.7
Gunnison	250	11,272,729	49	4,183,388	14,734.0
Lower Arkansas	457	12,712,998	78	2,198,344	224,654.2
Lower South Platte	373	7,484,538	52	1,177,209	20,720.7
North Platte/Yampa	143	2,778,124	33	761,879	8,742.8
Republican	322	5,621,770	113	1,873,548	61,391.4
Rio Grande	241	4,849,003	42	829,489	24,988.5
San Juan	190	4,532,525	82	1,275,816	41,309.9
Upper Arkansas	123	3,140,297	55	1,505,241	227,550.0
Upper South Platte	306	7,782,162	53	1,832,878	54,177.5
TOTALS	2,601	\$ 67,769,689	582	\$ 17,181,824	686,266.7

State-wide Totals By Issues

	# Applications Received	\$ Applications Received	# Applications Approved	\$ Applications Approved	# Acres Treated
Water Quality/Quant.	1,215	\$ 33,063,009	146	\$ 4,006,876	21,856.6
Soil Erosion	255	3,613,594	86	1,430,255	26,155.9
Grazing Lands	620	13,559,223	101	2,608,902	391,886.2
Drought	0	0	96	2,020,593	325,354.1
Wildlife	178	2,003,973	58	639,197	28,835.5
Animal Waste	38	3,003,657	24	1,075,716	3,009.6
Riparian	30	682,188	8	150,298	101.6
Forest Management	3	27,578	2	22,988	510.0
Salinity	257	11,392,887	55	4,856,380	579.4
Mountain Ute	2	355,530	2	250,000	6,905.0
Southern Ute	4	120,619	4	120,619	9,958.0
Ground Surface Water	428	13,431,412	119	3,703,200	32,529.6
TOTALS	3,030	\$ 81,253,670	701	\$ 20,885,024	847,681.5

GSWC Totals by Watersheds

	# Applications Received	\$ Applications Received	# Applications Approved	\$ Applications Approved	# Acres Treated
Lower Arkansas	139	\$ 7,126,942	40	\$ 1,833,860	14,091.1
Republican	225	5,288,646	50	1,308,136	13,185.9
Lower South Platte	64	1,015,824	29	561,204	5,252.6
TOTALS	428	\$ 13,431,412	119	\$ 3,703,200	32,529.6

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